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Honorable Roy W. Johnson   1 JUL 1959
Director
Advanced Research Projects Agency
Washington 25, D. C.

Dear Roy:

      Mr. Dulles has asked me to reply to your letter, with enclosures,
of June 22, 1959, to him on the subject of the security of the DISCOVERER
Program.

      I agree, of course, that we must take every practical step to ensure
that the vehicle does not fall in the wrong hands and to the extent that this
be accomplished through a destruct system we should certainly explore as
soon as possible all design possibilities.

      As your Agency was advised on 3 June (COR-0471) when the Lockheed
"probabilities" analysis was forwarded to ARPA, Lockheed was asked to
prepare promptly estimates and designs for a destruct system. This study
should be out very soon and when received it should be considered by BMD
along with the proposal referred to by Mr. Sutton in the attachment to your
letter.

      Very soon we should also have more precise information as to the
causes for the vehicle and system failures. This analysis should give us
a better idea as to the nature of the problems against which a destruct
system should be designed and whether the disadvantages of incorporating
such a system, e.g., the present critical weight situation, can be overcome
by the known performance of the destruct system as it comes out of BMD
and before it is installed.

      If at all possible, the various design possibilities including Lockheed's
should be discussed and reviewed at the July 2 meeting on the West Coast
which Dr. Golovin plans to attend, and at this time we should take up and
seek agreement regarding Dr. Sutton's recommendations 2, 3 and 4 in the
attachment to your letter.

NRO review(s) completed.

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In view of these developments, I suggest that you defer the issuance of directives until the results of this meeting are known.

Sincerely yours,

Richard M. Bissell, Jr.
Deputy Director (Plans)

Draft prepared by: DPD-DD/P 6/29/59
Rewritten: O/DDP:ggs (7/1/59)

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